

Introduction

This trail guide is provided to help you plan your hiking, bird watching, or biking trip at Kiptopeke State Park. Each trail is listed with a brief description of the area through which it passes.



Kiptopeke State Park has over four miles of trails for hiking, bird watching, and biking.

Due to the fragile sand dune area in the park, we ask that bikes and people stay on designated trails marked for hiking or biking. Please do not take bikes off official trails or on boardwalks.

Kiptopeke State Park and the Eastern Shore area is well-known as a migratory bird flyway and byway. During seasonal migrations, a myriad of bird species rest and forage in the coastal woodlands. In an effort to preserve and restore migratory bird habitat and songbird habitat, many areas of the park are part of significant reforestation projects. Take time to observe the trees and shrubs and notice their different sizes, shapes, and maturity. Please take care not to disturb these new-growth forests and remain on designated trails.



Ultimately, Kiptopeke State Park will become a fully-wooded coastal forest area that will support and protect migratory birds, songbirds, and hawks. It is and will become a prime place for bird watching and research as the forest areas redevelop.

Remember to bring your binoculars to watch and listen for the wonderful sights and sounds at Kiptopeke State Park.

Trails

Raptor Trail 

The Raptor Trail allows visitors to experience a reforestation project in progress. Through grant funding, the area has been replanted with a variety of native shrubs and trees to create forested habitat for migratory birds. Be sure to look and listen for the wide variety of birds that use this area as a migratory byway or their year-round home. Over the years you will see that area progress from an open field habitat to a mature forest habitat.

Baywoods Trail 

This looped trail runs through a coastal woodlands area. Stops along the way include Kiptopeke’s main-tained butterfly garden featuring native plant species, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory’s bird banding station, the hawk observatory platform, and access to the south beach. The trail can be accessed from the playground/picnic area.

Songbird Trail 

Running by an old farmhouse that speaks to the agricultural tradition of the Eastern Shore, the Songbird Trail also runs through a reforestation project area. Funded through The Nature Conservancy in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this reforestation area will create more migratory bird habitat to support the Eastern Shore as a migratory byway.

Mockingbird Trail 

On the south end of the park, the Mockingbird Trail is a wooded interconnective trail that takes visitors to a Bay Overlook. From the overlook, visitors can relax on benches, watch the tides change, and take in the breath-taking views of the Chesapeake Bay.

Chickadee Trail 

This short loop interconnects with the Mockingbird and Songbird Trails. On this short trail, mature forest habitat allows the park to support a diverse bird population.

Birding

Eastern Shore Bird Festival: Held every weekend following the first Wednesday in October, this family festival includes many Kiptopeke programs. Call (757)787-2460 for more information.

Kiptopeke Bird Banding Station: Since 1963, Kiptopeke has been the site every Fall of bird population studies sponsored by the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory and licensed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Volunteers have banded more than 300,000 migratory birds. For more info go to: www.cvwo.org

Kiptopeke Hawk Observatory: Since 1977, members of the Virginia Wildlife Observatory have observed more than 500,000 birds of prey at Kiptopeke, consisting of 10-12 different species. While visiting the bird banding area, please observe the following:

- Obey all signs.
- Do not disturb banding nets or equipment.
- You are welcome to speak with volunteers in the banding areas, but please visit briefly and allow their work to continue.
- These research activities are regulated by federal law. Possession of any bird species is prohibited by law except with proper permit.
- Designated bird banding area parking is located on Kiptopeke Drive at the bottom of the hill approximately half a mile past the park entrance. Vehicular entry to the natural area is by special permission only.

Join us in the parks – DCR's Volunteer Program
DCR offers diverse opportunities for volunteers in most state parks and natural areas throughout the state. Inquire at the park office for details.

For more information, contact:
Kiptopeke State Park
3540 Kiptopeke Drive
Cape Charles, Virginia 23310
(757) 331-2267

You can also visit our home page at www.dcr.virginia.gov



203 Governor St., Suite 302
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(800) 933-PARK

VIRGINIA

STATE PARKS


Kiptopeke
State Park
Trail Guide


Cape Charles, Virginia


Virginia State Parks provide
A Natural Legacy
of outdoor activities and
programs. They are an important
part of DCR’s efforts to promote
a strong conservation ethic.
These efforts ensure that the
best of Virginia’s natural
resources will be protected and
available for future generations.


Welcome to Kiptopeke, the only state park on the Eastern Shore. The 540-acre site offers a variety of outdoor recreation and ways to learn about our natural world. The park, like the entire Eastern Shore, has a long and colorful history. Park programming explores that history as well as the area's abundant natural treasures.


Kiptopeke State Park is a park under development. Local residents and repeat visitors will have the opportunity to see the park as it evolves with emphasis on day-use facilities and programs relating to the Chesapeake Bay. To make your visit safer and more pleasant, we ask that you observe the following regulations:


 Swimming and wading are allowed only in the designated area. Shallow water hazards, steep dropoffs and boating traffic make other areas of our park unsafe for swimming or wading.


 The public use or display of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.




















 Hiking trails are for pedestrians and bikes only. Help us preserve our dunes. Stay on the dune walkways.

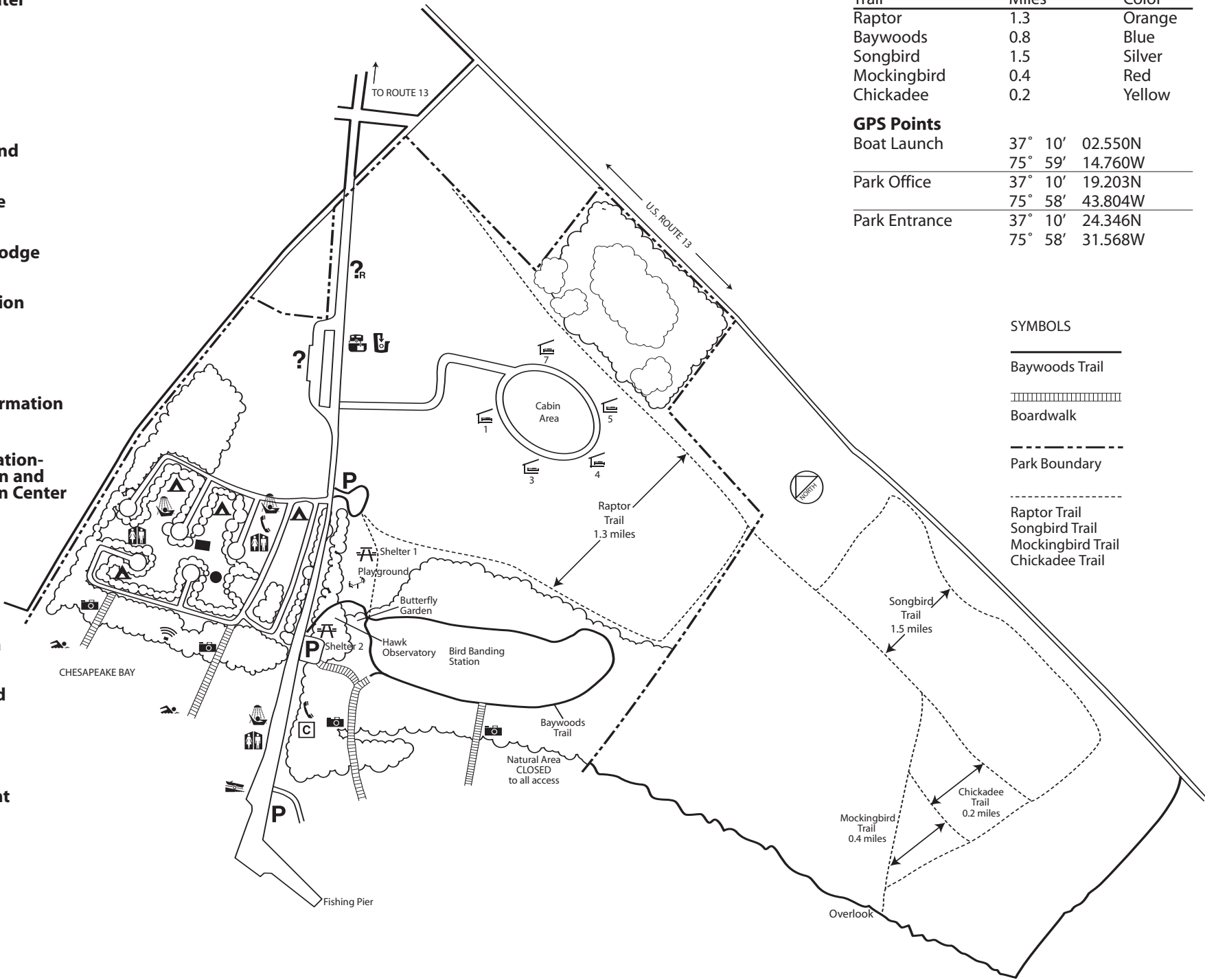
 Help preserve our park. Please don't cut or mar any plants or trees. Collecting animal or plant life is allowed only for scientific purposes by permit from the Richmond office.

 Pets are permitted in all state parks but must be kept in an enclosed area or on a leash no longer than six feet. No pets are allowed in swimming areas or toilet facilities.

 Please observe all park signs. Campground areas are for registered guests only.

 Please help us keep the park clean by placing litter in the proper receptacles. Please recycle aluminum cans.

-  **Amphitheater**
-  **Boat Ramp**
-  **Cabins**
-  **Campground**
-  **Camp Store**
-  **Camping Lodge**
-  **Dump Station**
-  **Dumpster**
-  **Office-Information**
-  **Contact Station-Information and Reservation Center**
-  **Parking**
-  **Phone**
-  **Picnic Area**
-  **Playground**
-  **Restrooms**
-  **Scenic Point**
-  **Shower**
-  **Swimming**
-  **Yurt**



Trail Map Key		
Trail	Miles	Color
Raptor	1.3	Orange
Baywoods	0.8	Blue
Songbird	1.5	Silver
Mockingbird	0.4	Red
Chickadee	0.2	Yellow

GPS Points		
Boat Launch	37° 10'	02.550N
	75° 59'	14.760W
Park Office	37° 10'	19.203N
	75° 58'	43.804W
Park Entrance	37° 10'	24.346N
	75° 58'	31.568W

- SYMBOLS**
- Baywoods Trail
 - Boardwalk
 - Park Boundary
 - Raptor Trail
 - Songbird Trail
 - Mockingbird Trail
 - Chickadee Trail